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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 000896

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - SUBJECT LINE

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: DPP EXPELS MEMBERS FOR ATTENDING KMT-CCP FORUM

TAIPEI 00000896 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Acting Director Robert S. Wang,
Reasons: 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Summary. The DPP expelled former legislator Hsu Jung-shu and former Council of Agriculture head Fan Chen-tzung from the party on July 27 for ignoring a party ban and attending the KMT-CCP Fifth Cross-Straight Economic, Trade and Cultural Forum in China. The DPP's stern stance demonstrates the party leadership's unease with Taiwan's deepening ties with China as well as the party's own struggle to determine how to handle members who seek to engage with PRC counterparts and participate in mainland events. End summary.

Prominent DPP Figures Ignore Party Ban

¶2. (C) The opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) on July 27 expelled former DPP legislator Hsu Jung-shu and former Council of Agriculture head Fan Chen-tzung from the party for five years after they defied orders banning them from attending the July 11-12 KMT-CCP Fifth Cross-Straight Economic, Trade and Cultural Forum in Changsha, Hunan Province. The expulsion came four days after the party initially decided to suspend Hsu and Fan and hours after Fan announced plans to withdraw from the DPP. The DPP passed a resolution on July 8 barring members who have served as party or elected officials from attending the forum after Taiwan press reported Hsu and Fan had accepted invitations from the KMT. Hsu and Fan participated in the forum despite the ban and, our contacts claim, several personal pleas by party members. DPP International Affairs Director Bikhm Hsiao acknowledged that the KMT had tried in the past to invite DPP members to the forum, but DPP members were not interested. (Note: The KMT-CCP forum was launched in 2006.)

¶3. (C) The CCP and KMT are trying to "pierce the unity" of the DPP by inviting the party's members to participate in their meetings, claimed Hsiao. She also maintained the CCP is trying to "co-opt" DPP members. The CCP probably offered Fan and Hsu "favors" to secure their attendance at the forum, opined Hsiao, Taipei City Councilor and DPP Central Executive Committee Member Wu Szu-yao and DPP Central Standing Committee Member Luo Wen-jia to poloff in separate meetings. Each contact explained that it was fine to visit China but

unnecessary to engage the CCP.

¶4. (C) The DPP had "no choice" but to take a hard line against Hsu and Fan, maintained Hsiao. Their visit was "a slap on DPP Chair Tsai Ing-wen's face," explained Tai Li'an, director of the independent Global Views Survey Research Center. Hsiao noted that the party had received a barrage of "plurks" and phone calls from members expressing outrage that Hsu and Fan attended the KMT-CCP forum (Note: Plurk is a social networking and micro-blogging service that allows users to send short messages known as "plurks.")

DPP Institutes New China Travel Policy

¶5. (SBU) This case reflects the DPP's broader attempt to handle a growing interest among its senior members in traveling to China in a non-personal capacity. On June 17, the DPP issued new regulations requiring all ranking party and government officials at the city and county councilor level and above to report non-personal travel plans to China to party headquarters. The DPP Chinese Affair Panel will review each case and decide whether to approve travel plans. The party formulated the new rules after Kaohsiung Mayor Chen Chu's highly publicized visit to China in May to promote her city's hosting of the World Games.

¶6. (C) DPP's Hsiao explained that the new rules were aimed at increasing transparency and pointed out that personal travel to China was not a problem. DPP members should travel to China to better understand the people and place but also need to adhere to party regulations, maintained Wu Szu-yao to poloff during a July 17 meeting. Wu opined that the party is not trying to approve or deny trips but is simply asking senior members to "register" and receive advice from the

TAIPEI 00000896 002.2 OF 002

party before traveling. Asked how members are reacting to the new rules, Hsiao claimed most members are not objecting to them. She noted that some members, including Tainan Mayor Hsu Tain-tsair were even reconsidering their trips. (Note: Hsu first announced plans to attend the opening ceremony in China of the First Strait Cup Sailing Boat Championship in late June and later cited a mid-July date.)

Comment

¶7. (C) The explosion of Hsu and Fan and the new travel rules implemented in June represent the DPP's heightened sensitivity not so much to travel to China by its members but to the need to impose party discipline. While our contacts have noted that trend of DPP members visiting China is not new and some have indeed take multiple trips, the new rules and stern reaction to Hsu and Fan's trip reveal the party's need to exert control in light of President Ma's ongoing initiatives to deepen cross-Strait ties. The two separate rulings on the Hsu and Fan case, first to suspend and then to expel them, reveals disagreement within the party on how tough a line to take when enforcing such new rules. In fact, it was well known that many lower level CCP members and analysts had met with DPP members on their trips to Taiwan in the past. The DPP probably hopes the strong punishment serves to warn other members not to openly defy the party in the face of the KMT and CCP challenge to divide the party further.

WANG